**IT Applications Unit 3, AOS 1, Online Communities**

Complete the following, from Chapter 2, Online Communities, pgs, 51-58

**Website that support online communities**

**Wikis**

1. Describe the nature of a wiki.

A wiki is a website that allows users to enter and communally edit its content. The website may consist of any number of interlinked webpages that can be edited via a web browser using a simple text editor or, in some cases, a simplified markup language.

1. What are strengths of wikis?

The power of a wiki is that since multiple people can work on the same document, the article becomes the sum of all their knowledge. This makes a wiki a great source of free information.

1. Distinguish between, public, protected and private wikis.

The ease in using a wiki, in part, is due to its openness. Most wikis on the internet are open to the public and most allow unregistered users, identified by their IP addresses, to edit content. Other wikis limit this function to registered users. Registering is usually a simply and quick process.

1. What is meant by soft security?

Soft security usually refers to [security](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Security) that protects something from harm in quiet and unobtrusive ways, often invisibly and after the fact, rather than with visible barriers before the fact.

**Blogs**

1. What is a blog?

A blog is a website that has only one main page and acts like an online journal or diary. A blog is usually maintained by a single author who makes regular entries that include comments, descriptions, news on a particular topic or person, images and videos. Entries are recorded in reverse chronological order so that the most recent entry is at the top of the list.

1. Distinguish between a blog and a wiki.

A blog is an online journal that allows the owner to post entries that are generally displayed in reverse chronological order. Many blogs allow readers to comment on these posts.  
  
A wiki is a type of website that allows multiple users to collaboratively create and edit pages.

**Forums**

1. Describe the nature of a forum.

An internet forum is an online message board or discussion website that supports online communities that wish to facilitate information exchange. Users are able to visit the forum and add comments that are called posts.

1. What is a thread?

A thread is defined by a title, an additional description that may summarise the intended discussion, and an opening or original post that opens whatever can contain any number of posts, including multiple posts rom the same members, even if they are one after the other.

**Purpose of an online community:**

1. To broadcast information and events using various tools
   1. List tools for broadcasting information - A simple website, a blog set up for the organisation, an email mailing list and a twitter account.
   2. What is a RSS feed? - Really Simple Syndication (RSS) allows users to receive content feeds from a variety of sources, including the latest news headlines. When you subscribe to an RSS feed, new stories and updates are automatically delivered to you via a web-based news reader, the moment they are created. RSS feeds can also be embedded into websites and blogs.
2. To facilitate discussions, collaboration & information using tools
   1. What is required for collaborative problem solving to work well? – Behind every successful project there is a team, a clear purpose ensures success and clearly documented processes will prevent misunderstanding.
   2. Distinguish between synchronous and asynchronous collaboration. –

Asynchronous – discussion forums or groups can be used to discuss the dynamics of a problem.

Synchronous - chat tools such as MSN can be used for collaboration. The group needs to remember to copy the conversation into a space where each group is accountable for decisions made.

1. To store and develop organisational knowledge
   1. List the tools for knowledge sharing and exchange. – Wikis, Microsoft sharepoint, groupware, content management systems, eg. Ultranet.

**Characteristics of online communities, p 57**

Be aware of the following:

In setting up an online community characteristics of communities need to be taken into account:

1. Online communities appealing to gender groups
2. Online communities appealing to special needs
3. Online communities appealing to cultural needs
4. Age-restrictive and age-targeted communities
5. Access requirements need also to be considered, (open or closed).

**Non-Technical Constraints on developing a website for a community, p 58**

1. Ensuring privacy in an online community
   1. Describe the strategies that co-ordinators can put in place to decrease the risk of privacy attacks. – Request for membership verified, eh. 24 hours waiting time; also word verifications, complex passwords and administrators observant to ensure protocols are not broken.
   2. How does the Information Privacy Act protect privacy? – data collected can not be used for any other purpose without consent.
2. Copyright in online communities
   1. What copyright considerations need to be taken into account when setting up a community? – do you own the images and text and are you broadcasting discussions and ideas in an open.
3. Human rights requirements
   1. What is contained in the Human Rights & Responsibilities Charter that covers members’ freedom, respect, equality and dignity – no encouraging of hate crimes or religious vilification of others, discrimination on any basis, no encouraging of victimisation and no assisting or authorising of others to engage in these activities.
4. Social online protocols
   1. What is meant by online protocols? - Protocols are the set of rules to regulating the procedure of communication over computer networks.